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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Wednesday May 18, 1977 CG NIDC 77-115C



NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Wednesday, May 18, 1977.

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[REDACTED] The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing Senior US officials.

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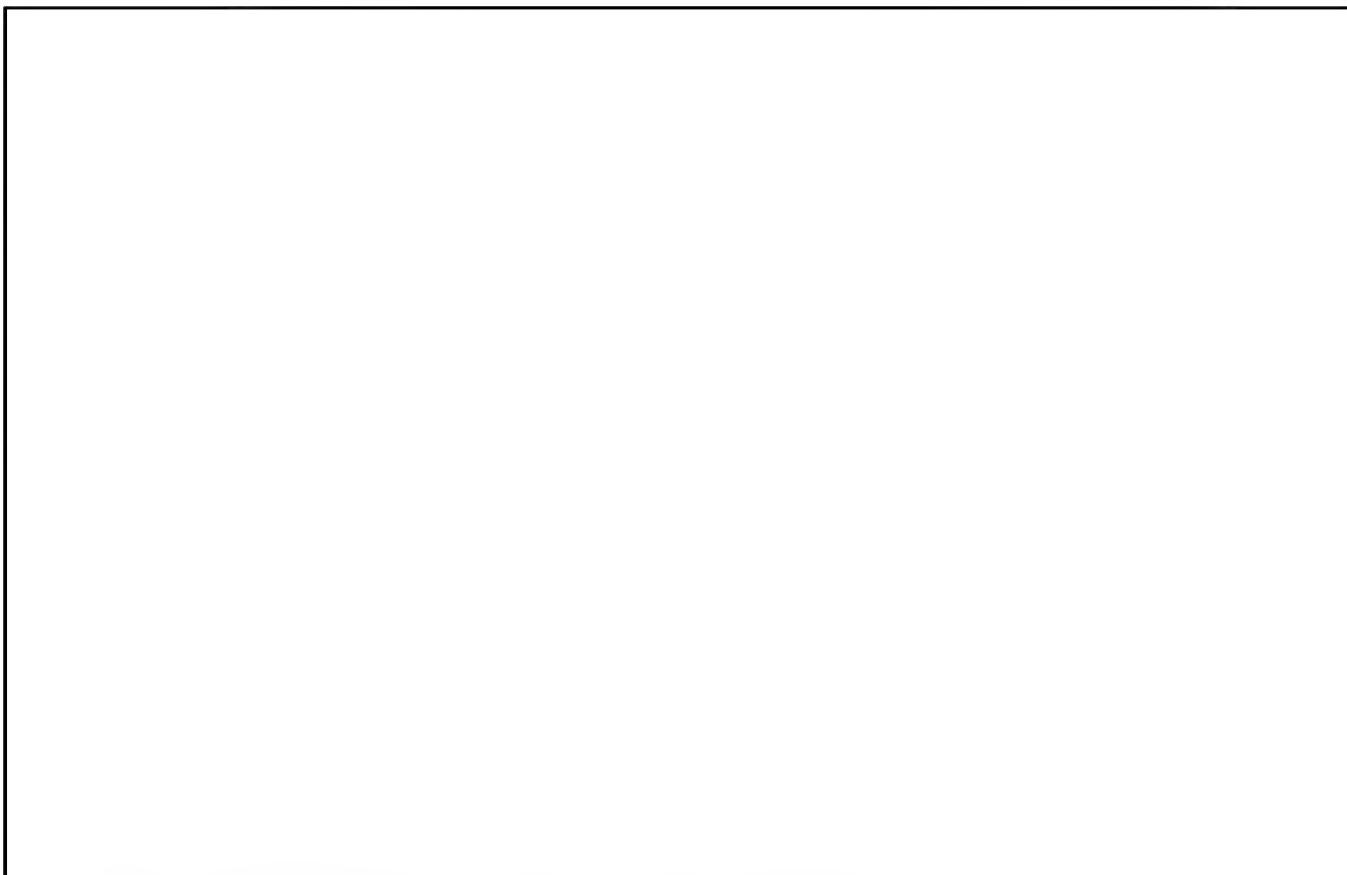
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CHINA: Attitude Toward Carter Administration

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[redacted] //The Chinese have reiterated their long-standing position that they reserve the right to use force if necessary to "liberate" Taiwan.//

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[redacted] Chinese Vice Premier Chi Teng-kuei, in an interview with a Japanese newspaper on Monday, reportedly said that the US had raised an "additional condition" by requiring that the Taiwan question be settled peacefully.

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[redacted] Chi's comments mark the first time a top-level Chinese official has publicly spoken of a US "condition" for the reunification of Taiwan. His statement may have been in response to President Carter's remark in his press conference last week that Taiwan should not be "punished or attacked".

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[redacted] //A New China News Agency representative in Hong Kong told US officials that the concurrent visits of US congressmen to Taipei and Peking smack of a US "balancing act" between the two sides.//

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[redacted] //While the Chinese are concerned about the Taiwan reunification issue, they apparently are fairly satisfied with other aspects of their relationship with the US. Peking seems pleased with President Carter's strong support at the London summit for NATO and the need to counter the Soviet buildup of forces in Europe. Regarding Chinese-US trade, China has exhibited a heightened interest in purchasing US technology in recent weeks, and has refrained from linking trade with the normalization of relations.// [redacted]

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USSR: Dissidents

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[redacted] //The Soviet regime's success in whittling away the effectiveness of the human rights movement in the USSR is reflected in the depression now affecting the few prominent dissidents who are not already under arrest or in exile. Some less well-known activists are trying to take the place of their arrested colleagues, but most appear to have been intimidated and are remaining inconspicuous.//

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[redacted] //Well-known dissident and former general Petr Grigorenko reportedly is so dejected over the present condition and bleak prospects of the human rights movement that he is thinking of requesting permission to visit his son in the US. Grigorenko knows that if permission is granted he will probably not be allowed to return to the USSR.//

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[redacted] //Despite his chronic poor health, Grigorenko has been among the most active dissidents. That he should now consider leaving the USSR indicates the extent of his discouragement.//

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[redacted] //Yury and Nelli Mnyukh, who have recently become prominent in the group monitoring Soviet performance in regard to the Helsinki accords, reportedly have received exit visas valid until June 5.//

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[REDACTED] //The Mnyukhs believe that the Soviet authorities' granted them permission to depart because the regime is attempting to sap the remaining strength of the movement by depriving it of its most effective leaders, either through emigration or arrest. The authorities have arrested Yury Orlov, founder of the group, and his colleagues, Aleksandr Ginzburg. The Mnyukhs also reportedly think the regime may calculate that giving some dissidents the option to emigrate may stand Moscow in good stead at the conference in Belgrade that will review the implementation of the Helsinki accords. This conference begins next month.//

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[REDACTED] //Notwithstanding such "magnanimous" gestures as getting rid of dissidents by emigration or expulsion, the Soviet crackdown on dissent of all kinds continues. The US embassy has learned of severe action recently taken against nationalists in Lithuania. For two days in late April, more than 50 residents of Lithuania's second largest city were interrogated and their apartments searched thus far only one or two arrests have been reported. Those involved were all ethnic Lithuanians who had expressed their nationalism by organizing visits to national monuments and engaging in other "patriotic" activities. [REDACTED]

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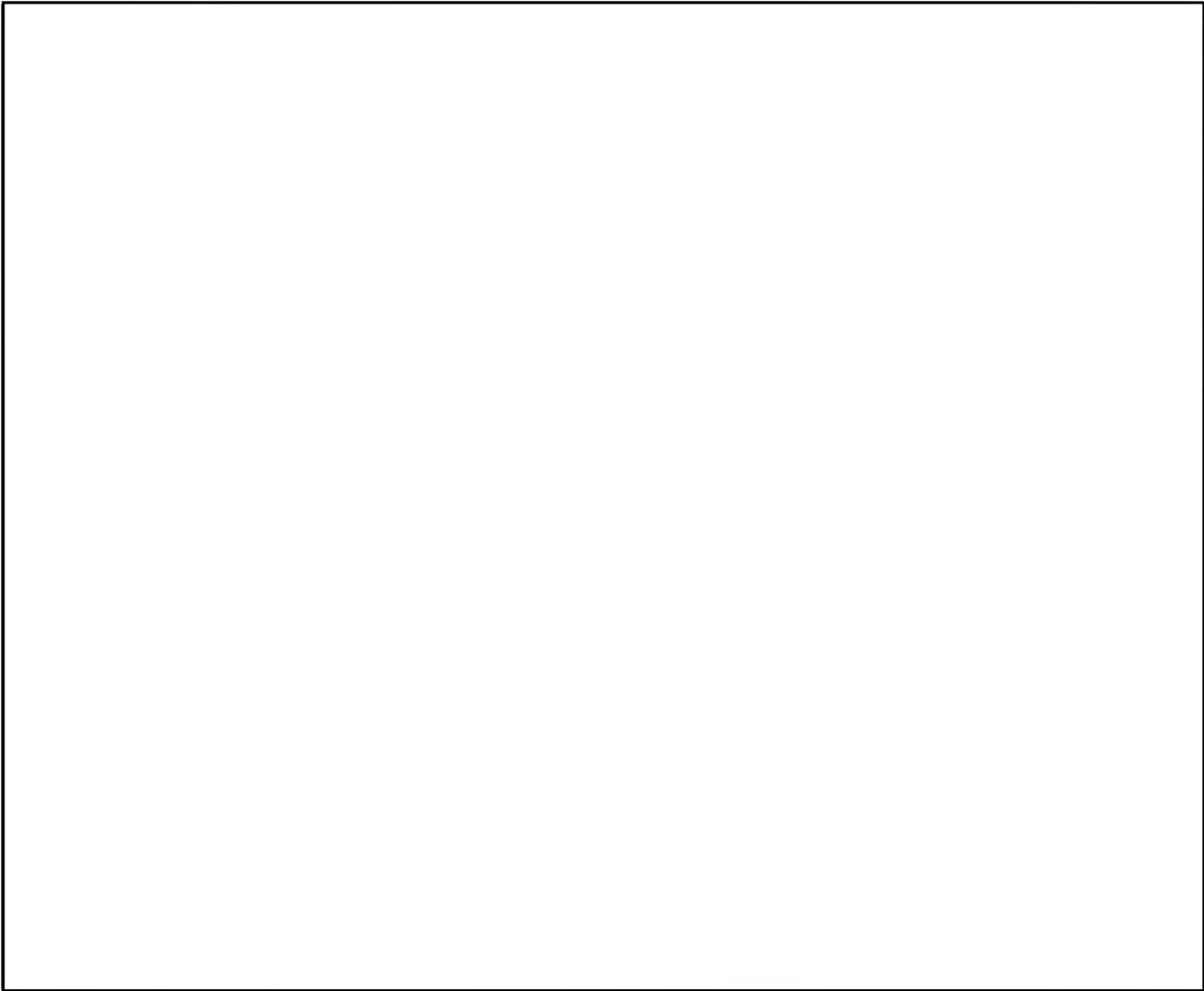
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SAUDI ARABIA: Impact of the Abqaiq Oil Fire

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[REDACTED] //The Abqaiq oil and gas processing facility in Saudi Arabia, which was damaged by a fire and explosion last week, is being repaired; production should resume in the next few days. According to a preliminary assessment from the US consulate, the loss of production will have been between 650,000 and 800,000 barrels per day--about 7 percent of Saudi

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Arabia's average daily output for April. Temporary arrangements could reduce the loss even further, but complete repairs may take several months.//

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//The impact on world oil supplies will be slight, as there is unused productive capacity around the world that can be substituted for the lost Saudi oil. Stocks in the major consuming nations are somewhat higher than usual, and these countries are going into a season of low consumption. Non-communist consumption in late spring and summer runs about 6 million barrels per day less than in winter.//

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//Abqaiq is a key facility for processing and distributing crude oil from the huge Ghawar oil field and other smaller fields. About 5.5 million to 6 million barrels per day normally flow through Abqaiq. Installations there include units that separate natural gas and natural gas liquids from the oil. The crude oil and the natural gas liquids are distributed by several large-diameter pipes to Ras Tanura for export or refining. The natural gas is used for liquefied petroleum gas production or oil field reinjection, or it is flared.//

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//The fire appears to have followed a rupture in an underground pipeline. Leaking oil was ignited by a spark almost immediately, and the fire spread quickly to one of three pumping stations and several gas-oil separators spheroids. The pumping station was heavily damaged; about two thirds of the pumps were destroyed. Two separator spheroids were destroyed and two more damaged. Four other spheroids were undamaged. Each reportedly can process 900,000 barrels per day of oil.//

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//The fire was extinguished last Saturday and repairs were begun on Monday. About 700,000 barrels per day of production was directed around Abqaiq after the fire broke out. The Saudi Oil Ministry expects to complete its investigation of the damage in the next 10 days. //

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[REDACTED]

RHODESIA-ZAMBIA-BOTSWANA: Cross-Border Policy

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[REDACTED] //The Rhodesian government's threat of pre-emptive strikes into Zambia is not an empty one, but such strikes would probably be made by Prime Minister Smith only after carefully balancing the seriousness of the guerrilla threat against the international political consequences.//

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[REDACTED] //In responding to Zambian President Kaunda's announcement on Monday that he was putting Zambia on a war footing, Smith stated he had implied no threat to Zambia. Clearly, however, Smith's threat of pre-emptive action against the guerrillas of Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African Peoples Union was an attempt to forestall an upswing in the insurgency that could affect the white minority government's staying power during long-drawn-out negotiations.//

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[REDACTED] //Kaunda's strong reaction to the Rhodesian threat reflects to a large extent Zambia's inability to defend its territory. Kaunda fears possible domestic political repercussions that would result from a sizable Rhodesian military operation into Zambian territory.//

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[REDACTED] //Kaunda has put his military on full alert and set up antiaircraft defenses at strategic locations. A Rhodesian pre-emptive strike would almost certainly result in widespread international sympathy for Zambia and probably lead to even greater foreign pressure for an early settlement on Rhodesia.//

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[REDACTED] //At this stage of international attention and concern, we doubt Rhodesia would cross the Zambian border in strength unless it had very specific intelligence on a major ZAPU offensive plan and the location of ZAPU forces in Zambia.//

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[redacted] //We cannot rule out a pre-emptive strike, however. A series of spectacular attacks by ZAPU could lead Smith to authorize punitive actions. We do not believe ZAPU is strong enough to carry out more than small-scale, scattered, hit-and-run operations inside Rhodesia, but the general level of ZAPU action will probably slowly increase through the rest of this year.//

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[redacted] //The cross-border raid that Rhodesia conducted into Botswana on Monday was apparently a typical hot-pursuit action, but the Rhodesian force involved may have been larger than in other similar raids conducted from time to time. We do not think there is any connection between Rhodesia's threat of pre-emptive action against Zambia and the Botswana raid. The latter probably was carried out by decision of the local commander under ground rules laid down by the Rhodesian high command. Botswana's sharp response to the raid probably reflects in part the absence from Gaberone of most knowledgeable and responsible officials. [redacted]

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ITALY: Political Violence

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[redacted] //Italian Prime Minister Andreotti's ability to combat Italy's growing political violence will face a severe test tomorrow if left-wing extremist groups defy a temporary government ban on demonstrations and carry out their threat to hold a mass rally in Rome.//

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[redacted] the extremist groups are planning a major confrontation with the government by having students under their control converge on Rome from other cities. Communist leaders reportedly fear that the situation could get out of hand and are urging Interior Minister Cossiga to take strong measures to prevent the demonstration. [redacted]

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USSR: USSR-International Communism

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[redacted] //The international conference of 75 communist parties, which met in Prague between April 27 and 29, was apparently a disappointment to its Soviet organizers.//

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[redacted] The Soviets clearly intended the conference to help hold together the various communist parties and maintain Soviet authority to rally them around Moscow's position on the trouble-some issue of political dissidents within the USSR and Eastern Europe.

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[redacted] //Although the Soviets were successful in organizing the Prague meeting--technically only of representatives of the parties affiliated with the international communist journal, Problems of Peace and Socialism--they failed in their apparent efforts to convert it into a major international conference of higher level representatives. Despite an intensive Soviet lobbying effort just a few days before the conference, the major West European communist parties--those of Italy, France, and Spain--reportedly agreed among themselves to send relatively low-level delegates.//

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[redacted] The Soviets also failed to muster general support for their position on human rights. Soviet ideologist Ponomarev stated the Soviet case in strong terms: he warned that Western criticism of Moscow's suppression of political dissidents was aimed not only at the Soviets, but was also intended to divide the communist movement and undermine the parties in the West.

[redacted]

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USSR: Global Atmospheric Project

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[redacted] The USSR has threatened to withdraw from participation in the first worldwide experiment of the Global Atmospheric Research Project in 1978 unless the US approves the sale of a computer the Soviets say is essential for the experiment. It is possible, however, that the Soviets are using the computer sale as an excuse and that the real reason they are contemplating withdrawing is that they are encountering problems developing the meteorological satellite they are expected to orbit for the experiment.

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[redacted] The Global Atmospheric Research Project--an international undertaking to collect detailed data to aid in worldwide weather forecasting--is sponsored jointly by the World Meteorological Organization and the International Council of Scientific Unions. The Soviets have announced a substantial contribution to the first experiment in terms of a geostationary satellite, ships, aircraft, and manpower, and their withdrawal would leave a serious gap.

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[redacted] The Soviets are developing for use in the experiment a meteorological satellite to be placed in geosynchronous orbit. The Soviets have not said that they are experiencing problems developing the satellite. However, they do not plan to launch the first one until November 1978--only one month before the international experiment is scheduled to begin. This allows no time for slippage in the development program or for problems in the operation of the satellite.

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[redacted] By directing attention toward refusal by the US to provide the computer, a Control Data 7600, the Soviets may hope to have a plausible excuse for not meeting the deadline for their participation in the experiment; they would thus not have to admit that they are having problems developing the satellite. If the Soviets could overcome a few shortcomings of their large domestic computer, the BESM-6, it probably could handle most of the operations needed for the experiment.

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[redacted] The Soviets probably hope for some face-saving way to continue participating in the experiment. Such a large international undertaking would provide them with large quantities of high-quality meteorological data that they would not be able to acquire if they had to rely on their own equipment.

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ARGENTINA: Church-State Confrontation

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[redacted] The Roman Catholic Church in Argentina has issued its first formal criticism of the military government. It is contained in a document signed by 67 of the nation's 84 bishops. Military hard-liners could react by seeking tougher measures to control dissent.

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[redacted] In the document, drafted during their semiannual conference, the bishops catalog the reasons for their dissatisfaction with political repression in the name of counterinsurgency. Although expressed in dispassionate terms, the statement is unequivocally critical.

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[redacted] As their reason for going directly to the people, the bishops cite the futility of their numerous personal, unpublicized appeals to government and military leaders. In perhaps the most telling portion of the statement, the bishops say that "no theory of collective security...can justify the destruction of the human being's rights, because social order and its progress...must be subordinated to the human being and not the reverse."

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[redacted] The bishops probably had difficulty deciding to express their criticism openly. Although it has been clear for some time that many of them have serious misgivings about the regime, few sympathize with leftist extremists. Like most Argentines, the clerics see no real alternative to the present regime. They are probably concerned, in fact, that their criticism will weaken the relatively moderate President Videla, opening the way to still harsher repressive practices.

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[redacted] By going public with their criticism, the bishops have thus taken a calculated risk. While they clearly hope to add momentum to the international efforts--notably by the US--to curb human rights abuses, their position could prove counterproductive.

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[redacted] A number of military men will view the church statement as an unwarranted intrusion into secular matters; some officers may even conclude that the church supports--or at least sympathizes with--subversion. The bishops' criticism, therefore, could well cause military hard-liners to redouble their efforts to secure more stringent controls over all aspects of national life.

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USSR-JAPAN: Stalemate Broken in Fisheries Talks

[redacted] Japan's chief negotiator at the current Japanese-Soviet fisheries talks in Moscow announced yesterday that the two sides had reached agreement in principle on the broad outlines of an interim accord. His announcement means that Tokyo and Moscow have apparently agreed to finesse the Northern Territories problem--the chief obstacle to progress in the bilateral fisheries negotiations for almost three months.

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[redacted] According to the Japanese press, the Japanese apparently accepted Soviet language on the area to be covered in the fisheries agreement, but they added an article stating that their acceptance of the Soviet zone applies only to fisheries matters. The Japanese thus will be able to maintain that they have not abandoned their claim to the Northern Territories--a group of islands northeast of Japan seized by the USSR in the closing days of World War II.

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[redacted] Other problems remain before a final accord can be worked out. The two sides, for example, have not yet begun to discuss the amount of fish Japan will be allowed to take from the Soviet zone. There is no question, however, that with the territorial question out of the way, reaching an agreement on both the interim accord and on a new long-term fisheries accord should be significantly easier. [redacted]

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